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By-O'Banion, Terry
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This study of student personnel programs is intended as a guide for colleges wishing to improve their programs after evaluating their own strengths and weaknesses. Junior colleges throughout the state submitted catalogs, manuals, and other material for review. Student personnel directors (43) from nine colleges completed the Inventory of Selected College Functions. Interviews with staff and students were conducted on five campuses, with participation by staff members from four other colleges. Major strengths were (1) most programs are well supported, (2) staff members are committed to student-centered education, (3) relationships are good among staff, faculty, and students, (4) staff members have good professional preparation, (5) some programs could serve as resource centers for other programs, (6) some innovative programs could inspire other colleges, and (7) students participate actively in college life. Major weaknesses were (1) some programs are peripheral and lack clear goals, (2) dean of students often has too many other duties, (3) some staff members feel a lack of professional identity, (4) present staff and funds are inadequate, (5) faculty members do not appreciate the program, (6) there is little in-service training or innovation, (7) staff lacks time for personal and vocational counseling, (8) students are apathetic, and (9) too few follow-up studies are made of dropouts or transfers. Based on these findings, the author presents eleven recommendations. (HH)

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JUNIOR COLLEGE STUDENT PERSONNEL PROGRAMS IN COLORADO

Terry O'Banion
University of Illinois

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Terry O'Banion
University of Illinois

Diversity is one of the most common characteristics of two-year institutions in Colorado. Some are isolated in mountain valleys, others are located in metropolitan areas; some accepted students in the 1920's, others will accept their first students next year; some have limited purposes, others could serve as national models of the comprehensive, community college; some are so small that recruitment is a major activity of the college, others are becoming so large that space is the major concern of the administration; some have programs that have become stabilized over the years, others are as innovative as any junior college in the nation; some maintain local autonomy, others have joined a new and developing system of community colleges. Where such diversity exists it is difficult to describe and evaluate the common strengths and weaknesses of student personnel programs. Very few conclusions hold true for all junior colleges in the State. In the following report conclusions regarding strengths and weaknesses may reflect only two or three of the colleges. Hopefully, the recommendations will serve to provide guidelines that can help all colleges improve their student personnel programs regardless of how each college evaluates itself in relation to the general strengths and weaknesses.

The report has been developed through three major processes of evaluation. First, materials describing student personnel programs (catalogs, student handbooks, policy manuals, accreditation reports, etc.) were received from most institutions and carefully reviewed. Second, the Inventory of Selected College Functions, an instrument for evaluating student personnel programs developed in the AAJC-Carnegie Project, was completed by 43 student personnel

workers in 9 junior colleges. Third, a visit to five campuses to interview staff and students was a major part of the evaluation; staff members from four additional campuses participated in these interviews. It should be noted that this report reflects present status; in several colleges plans are underway which will improve present practices considerably.

Major Strengths

(1) There is a very encouraging climate in the State of Colorado for the development of strong student personnel programs. Presidents view the student personnel program as an important part of the educational system and generally attempt to support the program as much as possible given the limited financial resources available. The Division of Community Colleges also supports student personnel activities by coordinating task forces and by sponsoring this state-wide evaluation. (No more than half a dozen states have organized similar studies of student personnel programs in junior colleges.) Most importantly, student personnel workers in Colorado two-year colleges are aware of the potential of development and are receptive to new approaches and new ideas.

(2) Student personnel staff members are strongly committed to a student-centered philosophy of education. Their genuine interest in students is manifested in flexible approaches, availability to students, willingness to explore and experiment, and their involvement with faculty and community to foster more relevant programs.

(3) Good interpersonal relationships exist in most institutions between student personnel staff members and faculty, students, and administrators and among student personnel staff members. There is a bond of mutual purpose and respect that can provide great strength for the further development of cooperative programs for students.

(4) Generally, student personnel workers have good professional preparation for their positions. With very few exceptions most have master's

degrees and better in counseling or in college student personnel work. Many have continued to attend graduate school in the summers or on a part time basis as well as special workshops and seminars designed to keep them informed of new developments.

(5) Some colleges have well-developed programs of student services that could serve as resource centers for other programs. In several colleges student informational materials are particularly outstanding.

(6) Some colleges have been able to launch innovative and experimental programs designed to maximize student development that could serve to stimulate similar action in other colleges.

(7) Most colleges have attempted to provide opportunities for student participation in the real life of the college. In these colleges students serve on most committees, assume responsibility for major decision-making, and participate in planned programs of instructional evaluation.

Major Weaknesses

(1) Goals and objectives of student personnel programs in terms of changes in the behavior of students are, for the most part, unclear and unexamined. Staff members like Alice in Wonderland are running rapidly in place to "keep up with the job". There is little consideration of the questions, "What is the job" and "What is worth doing". Student personnel programs are undergoing careful scrutiny across the nation, and in the words of the 1969 Maryland Guidelines for Junior College Student Personnel Programs, "Many of the old, cherished ideas that guided student personnel work are being questioned, remodeled, or cast aside as no longer 'relevant' to this day." Most programs are programs of reaction (responding to assumed needs) or as one respondent said, "We currently have a crisis to crisis 'band-aid' type of operation." Some programs are peripheral to the educational process for student development and operate only at the edge of the educational process in the traditional

provision of "services".

(2) The role of the dean of students, who is primarily responsible for giving leadership to the exploration of goals and objectives, is confused with too many duties. Too often the dean of students functions as the registrar and admissions officer which requires a great deal of time and serves to narrow considerably his view of the student personnel program. One dean noted, "The dean of students is expected to actually do everything, from the design of admissions forms and registration of students, to the moving of furniture for special activities."

(3) There is a lack of professional identity for junior college student personnel workers in the state. While financial aids officers and registrars and admissions officers have formed professional associations in the state there is a decided lack of professional communication among deans of students and other student personnel workers. Therefore, there is no opportunity to share common conerns and ideas as well as to develop a sense of commitment and direction for professionals within the state.

(4) The present level of professional staff, clerical personnel, facilities, and operating budget is sufficient to maintain only programs that are not adequately responding to the needs of students and the needs of institutions.

(5) While student personnel staff members enjoy good relationships with faculty members, faculty members for the most part do not understand the nature of the student personnel program and ways in which it can enhance their instruction.

(6) Few colleges provide opportunities for in-service training of staff members, inter-institutional visitation, and opportunities to experiment with new ideas.

(7) There is little time for personal and vocational counseling in most institutions. Counselors have had to assume responsibility for such a

variety of activities, especially academic advising, that they have little time to perform the major function for which they are professionally prepared.

(8) Most student activity programs suffer from a lack of involvement of students. Most student personnel staff members feel that their students are overwhelmingly apathetic. (Student apathy may be a very healthy response to irrelevant activity programs.)

(9) Little research is done in most colleges, especially in the area of follow-up of dropout students and transfer students. Few student personnel programs have developed any kind of evaluation of their services.

Recommendations

(1) Steps need to be taken immediately to organize a state-wide professional association of junior college student personnel workers as a vehicle for the evaluation and improvement of student personnel programs in the State of Colorado. Such an organization should be developed in concert with other facets of the junior college in the state. Perhaps an association of Colorado junior and community colleges could be established with special sections for administrators, student personnel, faculty, and students such as that developed in Oregon and Illinois. It is important for student personnel workers to have an opportunity to communicate at the state level with representatives from these other groups. If such a state organization, however, is not to be developed in the very near future, student personnel workers should go ahead with their own organization which can become a part of a larger organization at a later time.

(2) Once organized, student personnel workers should launch a major long-term study of their programs for the purpose of developing new and relevant approaches to student development. This present report can serve as a stimulus, but it is only a cursory attempt in relationship to what needs to be accomplished. Student personnel workers in the state need to participate in an intensive

examination of new directions and new models for student personnel programs. A special committee, possibly made up of representatives from Task Force B, along with members of the Division of Community Colleges, should develop a two to three year plan for student personnel improvement for the State of Colorado. Such a plan might include an initiate workshop in the fall of 1969 to stimulate and encourage student personnel workers to participate in the long-range project. Appropriate workshops, evaluations, consultants, visitations and materials would need to be used in such a project.

(3) To initiate and coordinate the development of a long-term project for the evaluation and improvement of student personnel programs in Colorado a special staff assistant should be appointed to the Division of Community Colleges in the area of student personnel. Such a staff member would assume major responsibility for coordinating the activities outlined in (1) and (2) as well as those recommended in this report. A more detailed description of suggested activities for this staff person is included in Appendix A.

(4) All colleges should carefully consider ways to involve students in the major decision making processes of the college. Students should participate on all major committees of the college, should be involved in a planned program of evaluation of instruction, and should have major responsibility for organizing and coordinating their own non-classroom activities.

(5) All colleges should develop acceptable procedures for due process. In that regard several colleges in the state have developed very excellent statements that should be shared with other colleges.

(6) Each college should evaluate the effectiveness of its academic advising program and consider other approaches to this function. One college stated, "The faculty advising program as it is now is of little value to some students. Many of the instructors are not acquainted with requirements at other schools, and many are not very well acquainted with the requirements here." This may be characteristic of other programs in the state as well. Special con-

sideration should be given to orientation, advising, and pre-registration in small groups over the summer.

(7) A careful study of probation and suspension needs to be made in order to determine if the practice in this area may not be a denial of the open door policy. Several colleges have very high suspension rates of students.

(8) Student profiles should be developed for use by high school counselors, students, and junior college faculty members. Present data gathered by ACT can be used to develop such profiles.

(9) Consideration should be given to the provision of workshops on group work. The basic encounter group is one of the most important innovations in student personnel work in many years and few student personnel staff members have experience or training in this area. Several staff members are using their vacations to become competent in the group process, but with the interest so wide-spread in the state some coordination for in-service training needs to be given to this area immediately.

(10) State leaders in junior college student personnel work should explore with colleagues from the state universities about the possibilities of offering special programs of preparation for junior college counselors and student personnel workers. Where possible, junior colleges should participate with state universities in providing opportunities for internships and practicums as well as opportunities for research by graduate students.

(11) Where appropriate, careful consideration needs to be given to the special problems of minority groups. Student personnel responsibility for recruitment, testing, advising, counseling and placement of minority group students needs to be studied and implemented in most colleges.

Appendix A

Assistant Director for Student Development*

Division of Community Colleges

Major Tasks

(1) The first major task of the Assistant Director for Student Development should be to visit each of the eleven two-year institutions in the state to become acquainted with student personnel and other staff members. If time permits he might spend a week at each campus as a "consultant-in-residence" so that he can become knowledgeable of the various problems of the various colleges and at the same time establish relationships with student personnel staff members.

(2) The role of the assistant director should be defined as one of coordination and service. He should see his role as working for and with the student personnel staff members of the state in order to improve student personnel services in Colorado. In that regard he should be most careful to avoid any appearance of imposing restrictions from the Division of Community Colleges.

(3) The assistant director should assume major responsibility for organizing a state-wide professional organization for student personnel workers. Through such an organization he will have the vehicle for communication and the opportunity to initiate many of the programs that need to be developed.

(4) The assistant director should initiate and coordinate a state-wide long-range project for the evaluation and improvement of student personnel services in Colorado. He must give leadership to these tasks but must at the same time encourage and develop the potential leadership that exists among student personnel workers in the state.

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*Such a title reflects the emerging role for student personnel work in the junior college. The student personnel worker is a specialist in student development; he is not a technician who maintains the efficient functioning of "services".

(5) The assistant director must work closely with faculty members, students, community leaders, the State Board for Community Colleges and Occupational Education, and other staff members in the Division of Community Colleges to keep them informed of problems and practices in the area of student personnel. As a liaison person to these groups he will serve as a public relations person but will also serve to coordinate projects in which student personnel people can cooperate with these various groups and agencies for the development of student programs.

(6) The assistant director should serve as a link with new programs and professional organizations throughout the United States in order that he can serve to communicate new developments and innovations to the colleges within the state. He should serve as a major resource person and should develop appropriate communication devices for informing student personnel workers of new developments and new approaches.

(7) More specifically, the Assistant Director for Student Development should give early attention to the following tasks which have been identified in the present evaluation:

(a) Special workshops for student personnel people in the state need to be organized around common problems. A workshop on the process of the human encounter group is needed in the near future.

(b) Special research projects common to a number of the institutions should be organized and coordinated by the assistant director.

(c) Current state and federal reports need to be examined to see if there can be a reduction in the number required. In no case should the Assistant Director for Student Development initiate new required reports until he has carefully considered the need with appropriate personnel.

(d) Careful study should be given to the need for state-wide coordination of athletics and other student activities.

(e) The assistant director should coordinate the work of Task Force B and assist the various sub-committees of Task Force B in the development of their reports.

(f) The assistant director should work with the various state colleges and universities to develop programs of articulation with the various two-year colleges. In that regard it may be possible to develop a state-wide guide for the transfer of courses.

(g) The assistant director should work with universities in the state that have graduate programs for the preparation of junior college counselors and student personnel administrators to assist in the development of their programs. Specifically he should be in touch immediately with the University of Colorado to offer his services as they develop a beginning program in junior college student personnel work.

(h) The assistant director needs to work carefully with the following state agencies for the development of student personnel work in junior colleges: State Scholarship Program, Colorado Council on High School-College Relations, Colorado Financial Aids Administrators, Colorado Personnel and Guidance Association, School Counselors Association, Colorado Junior College Registrars and Admissions Officers, and other state and regional organizations and agencies.

(i) The assistant director should examine the possibility of coordinating a placement service for junior

college student personnel workers who will be needed in the Colorado system. This would give him an opportunity not only to serve individual colleges in their needs but would also provide a vehicle for him to be in touch with a number of important resources at the national level.

(j) The assistant director should act as a resource person to coordinate the development of projects for which federal or other appropriate funding may be obtained.

Personal Qualifications

(1) The Assistant Director for Student Development should have a sound program of professional preparation in student personnel administration and/or counseling. Hopefully he would have had some professional preparation in the area of the junior college and will have obtained the doctorate.

(2) Experience in student personnel work at the junior college level is very important. He needs to understand the particular problems of the junior college student, know the problems of community involvement, and understand the role and function of the junior college in the society.

(3) He needs to be strongly committed to the student personnel point of view; his own attitudes, beliefs, and values need to be congruent with those of the comprehensive, community, junior college.

(4) He needs to relate well with others and needs to be sensitive to the needs of others to be involved in the development of a state system. He should be able to provide the leadership that will encourage others to share their ideas and creativity which he can coordinate and give direction to.

(5) He should be knowledgeable of student personnel programs in other states and regions and should have access to the major national student personnel organizations. In that regard he should attend meetings of the

American Association of Junior Colleges and the American College Personnel Association as one way to stay attuned to national developments.

NOTE: A Selection Committee representing the student personnel leaders of the state should participate with staff members of the Division of Community Colleges in interviewing and selecting the person for the position. If possible, presidents, faculty members and students may be represented on the Selection Committee.

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